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REMARKS  
ON  
Dr. SHERLOCK's SERMON  
OF  
*The Danger of corrupting the Faith by Philosophy.*

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ADVERTISEMENT.

*Lately Published,*

**A**N Apology for the Parliament, humbly representing to Mr. *John Gailhard* some Reasons why they did not at his Request enact *Sanguinary Laws* against Protestants in their last Session. In two Letters by different Hands.

Sold by *Richard Baldwin.*

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THE  
DOCTRINE  
OF THE  
**Catholick Church,**  
AND OF THE  
CHURCH of ENGLAND,  
CONCERNING THE  
**Blessed Trinity,**  
Explained, and Asserted,

Against the Dangerous Heterodoxes  
in a Sermon by Dr. WILLIAM SHERLOCK,  
before my Lord Mayor and the Court of  
Aldermen.

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L O N D O N,

Printed for *Richard Balwin* in *Warwick-lane*, 1697.





*Remarks upon Dr. WILLIAM SHERLOCK'S*  
*( False and Treacherous ) Defence, and Explication,*  
*of some principal Articles of Faith; in a Sermon, before*  
*my Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen, on*  
*April 25. 1697.*

**I** No sooner saw the Title of this Sermon, *The Danger of corrupting the Faith, by Philosophy*; and the Text, *Let no man spoil you, through Philosophy*; but I imagined what was the Author's design. To protect himself from, and to be revenged upon, the *Oxford-Heads*, and the famous *Decree* there made; by an Insult upon the *Learning of the Place*, upon *Philosophy* it self.

He addresses his Sermon against *Philosophy*, and *Reason*. Against *Philosophy*, on the Authority of a (mistaken) Text of Scripture. Against *Reason*, on his own Authority, but not without a just provocation we may be sure; *because he found Reason was first against him*.

*Reason*, *Sagacity*, *Knowledge*, *Wisdom*, are but only several names of the same thing; and I never heard of any thing that *Reason* was against, or that was against *Reason*, but only *Folly* or *Falshood*. Therefore, tho there have been some, as particularly great *Erasmus*, who *jestingly* wrote *Encomium morie*, the Praise of Folly: I did not expect that a Dean of *St. Paul's* would have *preach'd* for Folly, because I took preaching to be a *serious* Exercise.

*Dr. Sherlock* had a mind to declaim against *Reason*, and against *Philosophy*: Why? For the sake, he saith, of certain *Articles of Faith*, that are in great and present danger, from *Philosophy* and *Reason*. What, Man; wilt thou say then that there are *Articles of Faith* which disagree with *Reason*, and with *Philosophy*? *Reason* being nothing else but *Wisdom*; nor *Philosophy*, but the *Observations* and *Experiments* that have been made concerning the nature of things, in one word

*Experience*: This Undertaking, to defend the Articles of Faith, by decrying Reason and Philosophy, is to say in effect, the Articles of Faith are not consistent either with *natural Wisdom*, or with *experimental Knowledge*. Than which a more dangerous, or more opprobrious thing could not be said, by *Vanini*, or *Hobbs*, or other the rankest Atheist in the World: In very deed, 'tis *the whole* that Atheists and Infidels would perswade; they reckon, and so far forth they reckon truly, that they gain their point by such a Concession.

This kind of Defence therefore, is as false and treacherous, as our Author's Explication, of the Articles intended, is heretical and anti-christian. *Non tali auxilio, non defensoribus istis*; the Articles of Faith lack no such Defences, or Defenders. Tho all of them are not discoverable by meer Philosophy, or by natural unassisted Reason, yet they perfectly agree with both; and receive light and confirmation from 'em.

Well; but seeing the Doctor had taken a conceit against Philosophy; Why did he choose this Text, so contrary, in the opinion of all *Interpreters*, to his purpose? For they are all of opinion, that the Apostle speaks not of Philosophy in general, but of *the Platonick Philosophy*; and more especially of the notions of that Philosophy, concerning *a Trinity of Divine Spirits and Substances*: which Notions are the very same with Dr. *Sherlock's*, as is not only confessed, but most largely proved, by the chief Assertor of them, Dr. *Cudworth*. See Mr. *Pool's Synops. Critic. in loc.* and Dr. *Cudworth's Intel. System*, p. 546, & *deinceps*.

But let us make an Abstract or Summary of this Sermon: of the Points or Doctrines, it advances; and of the Reasonings, that are used here, to support them. And afterwards, consider briefly, both the one and the other. He observes,

1. *That*, Philosophy and Reason are the only things, which those men adore, who would have no God at all. And *that*, what makes some men Atheists and Infidels; even the Philosophick Tincture, and their adherence to Natural Reason: the same makes others to be Hereticks; \* that is, to be Arians, Socinians, and Pelagians. *Pag. 1. and 6. and 9.*

2. *That*, to find the true Christian Faith, we must attend only to Scripture. Not to the meer *Words*, or *Phrases*, there used; for such a Confession or Declaration of the Faith would leave all the Heresies untouched, and all Hereticks in quiet possession of their Opinions; because

because they all submit to the *Words*, and *Phrases* of Scripture. But for ascertaining what is the true Faith, we must attend to Scripture only, in this Sense ; namely, to what is the *true Meaning* of Scripture-words and Phrases : to *that* Meaning which the *Phrase* and *Words* do imply ; rejecting all mixture of Philosophy and natural Reason, in our Disputes and *Inquiries, concerning the Meaning of Scripture.* P. 7, 8, 9.

3. *That*, as we are Christians ; and unless we will be understood, to reject the supreme Authority of Revelation, we must believe those Doctrines that are most mysterious and unconceivable : notwithstanding *any* Objections from Natural Reason, and from Philosophy, against 'em. Whereupon he hath this Aphorism ; He that believes no farther than natural Reason approves, believes his Reason, and not the Revelation ; he is a natural Philosopher, not a Believer. P. 11, 12.

4. *That*, Difficulty of conceiving a thing, may the *absolute Unconceivableness* of it, must not hinder our Assent to what is contained in *Divine Revelation* : because we do not disbelieve what is made known to us, by *Sense*, or by *Reason* ; notwithstanding *any* Difficulty, or *Unconceivableness*, adhering to it. And as to *Contradictions*, so often objected in these cases : 'tis an easy matter, to find Contradictions in what we do not understand ; when we will be reasoning on what we do not understand, there will be *Contradictions* and *Impossibilities* innumerable, in our Guesses about 'em. P. 13, 14, 15, 16.

After this, he answers to two Objections ; whereof the first is, That it seems very unnatural, that God having made us Reasonable Creatures, and thereby having made natural Reason the measure of Truth and Falshood to us, we should notwithstanding be required to believe without Reason. If we must believe with our Understandings ; how can we believe what we do not understand ? To this he answers, by saying ; when an Objection is made against any thing, or that it is (as we apprehend) *without* Reason, or against and *contrary* to Reason : the Objection is of no value, if such thing is not the proper Object of Reason ; such as the Natures and Essences of things, their essential Reasons, their Unions, Operations, and Properties : which no Man (he saith) can pretend, are the Objects of Reason, or that any Man living can know any thing of them. And this, he adds, is all the Incomprehensibility and Contradiction that Men can charge on the Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation. P. 17, 18, 19.

The second Objection is ; To what purpose can such a Revelation serve

serve, or of what use can such a Faith be, which is concerning things we cannot comprehend or understand; and to which Reason disagrees? He answers, *First*; we may use the *World*, and every thing in it, as fully and to as good purpose; as if we understood the Reasons, and internal Natures of things. The Objection, if it hath any force, takes place, as much against created Nature, or the Complex of things called the *World*, as against the Gospel-Mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation: for the former is all *inconceivable Mystery*, as well as the latter. He answers again, *Secondly*; Tho we understand not the *Trinity*, the *Incarnation*, or the necessity of the *Satisfaction* by the Death of the Son of God: 'tis for all that a very *useful* Knowledge, even this, that *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son; to the end, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* P. 21, 22, 23.

This is the Substance, and Force of the Sermon. And one would think, on a general View of this Discourse; that all Dr. *Sherlock's* Care and Concern were for the poor distressed Articles of the Christian Faith: that there is nothing in his Thoughts, however nothing equally in his Thoughts; as the *Defence* and Patronage of the (Catholick Doctrines of the) Trinity, the Incarnation, and Satisfaction. But I know no body but himself, and his Party of *Realists*, as they call themselves, that question the Articles of the Trinity, the Incarnation, or the Satisfaction, in the Sense they are held by the Catholick Church. It is even necessary to caution his Hearers, and Readers, what this Doctor's true meaning is, when he pretends to plead for the Trinity, and the Articles thereon depending. For when he cries *Trinity*, he means *three Eternal and Infinite Spirits*; that is, he says *Trinity*, and means *Tritheism*: and this is the Reason, why his Defences of the Catholick Doctrine of the Trinity, are as false and weak, as his Explication of that Doctrine, that I may use the words of the *Oxford-Decree* concerning it, is *heretical and impious*.

The whole Catholick Church believes; that Almighty God is *one* Infinite and Eternal Spirit. That the Divinity was so incarnate in the Humanity of the Lord Christ, as to exert in it the Divine Attributes: as *Omniscience*, or the Knowledge of the Thoughts, and of the Future; and *Omnipotence*, or the Power of Miracles. Whereupon there followed (as Divines speak) a *Communication of Idioms*: Which is to say, in consideration of this Incarnation, we say *God was made Man*;



*Man*; and the *Lord Christ is true God*. But by the former, 'tis only meant, that by his Incarnation or Indwelling in the Humanity, it may be said, (somewhat Catachrestically or improperly) that *God became Man*: by the other, that *the Lord Christ is true God*, is meant; he is *God* (and whatsoever may be said of God) *in respect of God in him*. Farther, that our Blessed Saviour by his *active* and *passive* Obedience, *did reconcile Men to God*, and *God to Men*, and *satisfied* whatsoever the *Justice* of God required for the Pardon of Sin, and the Donation of eternal Life; on the Conditions however (on our part) of Faith, Repentance, and Newness of Life.

As to the Divine Persons, that the Divine Essence or Substance, or the Divinity it self, can be no otherwise distinguished or diversified, but only (as the Bishop of Worcester words this matter) by *different Modes of Subsistence*, or *relative Properties*: which, being considered together with the Divine Essence and Attributes, are named *Persons*.

In this Faith all the Denominations of Christians do acquiesce. As it is the *Churches* Doctrine, and *her whole Doctrine* about these Matters; 'tis also imbraced, by all the *Sects* of Christians, except only the Arians: of which Perswasion there are none (I think) in *England*; nor in the Dominions of any Christian Prince or State. But Dr. *Sherlock*, and with him some few others, endeavour to disturb this happy Agreement and Consent; they would divide us by novel Doctrines, and a new Explication of the Trinity: an Explication which is as manifest Polytheism and Paganism, as any of the (old or modern) Heathens were ever guilty of. He hath not indeed in this *Sermon* declared expressly, what kind of Trinity he pleads for; but he intimates it, and plainly points to it, at p. 7, and 10. He owns (at p. 10.) 'tis the *new Explication*; and at p. 7. the *real Trinity*: by which Names (all Men know) he and his Party call their *Trinity of Spirits and Substances*, in all their Books. Therefore, tho if another Man had preached this Sermon; the Errors and Weaknesses, for which 'tis so remarkable, might have been charitably overlook'd: yet coming from him who designs to establish a Heresy, that subverts the grand Design of Christianity, and revives Paganism, under the disguise of a (false) Zeal for the Catholick Doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Satisfaction; it would be a very drowsy Neglect, not to give notice and warning of this *Wolf in Sheeps Clothing*; or not to detect the

*False.*

*Faigeness* of his Reasonings, as well as the *Impiety* of his Principles and Doctrine. I come therefore now to a particular Discussion of the several Parts of his Sermon, which I have already represented in distinct Propositions.

The *first* was: "Philosophy and Reason are the only things which those Men adore, who would have no God at all. And what makes some Men *Atheists*, and *Infidels*; even the Philosophick Tincture, and their Adherence to natural Reason: the same makes others to be *Hereticks*; that is, to be Arians, Socinians, and Pelagians.

He intended it, without doubt, as a mighty Prejudice against Reason and Philosophy, that Atheists and Infidels pretend to both; and that they seem to esteem nothing else. And, in truth, a notable Reasoning it is, for a Sermon; as Sermons ordinarily now go: but from the Prefs, or in a Book, 'tis a contemptible Weakness. Atheists, and Infidels, magnify Philosophy, and Reason: therefore Divines, and good Christians, must be hence cautioned, that Philosophy and Reason will despoil 'em of *their Piety* towards God, and their *Faith* as Christians. Sir *Francis Bacon*, Lord *Verulam*, is often quoted, for a contrary Aphorism, namely this: that indeed "a smattering in Philosophy, inclines Men to Atheism and Irreligion; but a Mastery in "it, *begets* and *nourishes* Piety and Faith. And surely, Experience has shown, he was in the right. For those Divines, who have also been *Philosophers*, are the Men, that have by their Writings done the greatest and most successful Service to Religion. Which, in such an Age as this, would hardly have stood its Ground, under the Management of Divines, that were not Philosophers also.

The Weapons of Atheists and Infidels, Dr. *Sherlock* saith, are Philosophy and Reason: I am of opinion, they must be beaten at their own Weapons; or they will never be beaten. Yield but to them Philosophy and Reason; the Advantage, I fear, will be judged to be on their side. I wonder how this Doctor, who is for excluding Reason and Philosophy, as Enemies to Divine Truth, would deal with the Atheists and Infidels. But it may be, he would buy him a mally Quarto Bible, with Clapps and Bibles, and knock 'em down with it.

And it troubles him sadly too, that Philosophy and Reason are the Weapons of *Hereticks*; of Arians, and Socinians, and Pelagians: as well as of Atheists and Infidels. And from hence he infers, as before; that it was this same (scurvy) Philosophy, and Reason, that *made 'em*

*Here-*



*Hereticks.* Without doubt this was intended at the *Oxford-Heads*. Those morose old Gentlemen that could not let a Man alone, in a small slip but must be decreeing and censuring, as soon as ever 'tis said or printed that there are *three* Eternal and Infinite Spirits: 'tis but fit they should be told their own; that 'tis they, with their *Philosophy*, and their *Logicks*, or *Art of Reasoning*, that make all the Hereticks. And yet 'tis thought, by some odd Fellows, on the other hand; that *Philosophy* and *Reason* never caused that Mischief that our Preacher pretends: and they offer, to confirm what they say, by the Example of the Arch Heretick *Socinus*: Who never understood *Philosophy*; nor so much as *Logicks*, or the *Art of Reasoning*, till the latter part of his Life. Toward the latter part of his Life, he got some Skill in the *Sophistical part* of *Logick*, and wrote a little Treatise about it. Howe're it be; I find, 'tis like to go hard with *Philosophy*; whatever becomes of *Reason*. For Dr. *Sherlock* warns, in effect, my Lord Mayor, and the Court of Aldermen, that they take care, that their Children may never see *Oxford* or *Cambridge*; for there they will catch the *Infection of Philosophy*; and after that, 'tis certain they will be Hereticks, Arians, or Socinians, or Pelagians. The Hereticks on the other side, many of them, are no less bitter against this same (damnable) *Philosophy*: they protest, especially in their Latin Works; that 'tis *Philosophy* that corrupted and debauch'd Divinity. I wish in my heart these Gentlemen (the Doctor and the Hereticks) do not play booty, into one anothers hands: for as angry as they would seem against one another, 'tis plain, they join Stocks against *Philosophy*.

As for poor *Reason*, and the Hurt she does, in seducing Men from the true Faith; I will consider what may be said in the case, in another part (a more opportune place) of this Answer; and content my self to make here this one Reflection. 'Tis very surprizing to me, that this Doctor should turn *Heretick-taker*; when he himself stands censured of *Heresy*, and in the very point of the Trinity, by Decree of the most famous University in the World. Not only so, but some Learned and Orthodox Writers, as great *Anti-pelagians* as himself, pretend to a Discovery, that he and his Party of *Realists* are *Socinians*; and start just from the same place, from whence *L. Socinus*, *Ochinus*, *Blandrata*, and other Founders of Socinianism, first set forth. They prove this Charge, by two things: First, that the Doctrine of

Dean *Sherlock* concerning the Divine Persons, is exactly the same, with the Heresy of *Laelius Socinus*, *B. Ochius*, *G. Blandrata*, *V. Gentili*, and other Founders of Socinianism: they all teach alike, three Divine *Essences*, *Substances*, and *Spirits*. And whereas, against this every one would be ready to object; that three Infinite Spiritual *Essences*, three Eternal all-perfect *Spirits*, must needs be three Gods: against which the Scripture is positive; asserting every where, that there is *but one God*. They answer'd, there is *but one God*; the Father is that *one God*, the *true God*, the *most High God*, and *God of the other two Divine Persons*. The reason is, *the Father only is unoriginated*; the Son and Spirit are originated from the Father, as their *Fountain and Cause*: this *Pre-eminence*, or Pre-eminence of the Father, doth intitle him to the name of *the God* by way of Excellence, *the one God*, the *true God*, the *most High God*; nay and of *God of the Son*, according to that of our Saviour himself, *I ascend—to my God and to your God*. Dr. *Sherlock* dissolveth the objected Difficulty after the same manner. For when he hath said, three Infinite *Essences*, three Eternal *Spirits*; he saith also *but one God*: and interprets those words, *I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God*, as *L. Socinus* (and that *Junto*) did; namely thus, in these very words. “There is no Inconvenience in owning, that the Father is *the Head*, and the *God*, of the Son, as the Son is a Divine Person: for the Father is *the Fountain of the Deity*. The Son being *only God of God*, [that is, God originated from God, namely from God the Father] therefore the Father may be called *his God*. Vindic. of the Trin. p. 134. The other Proof of the Charge of Socinianism against the Dean; and of a design to introduce it, is; that the Doctrine of three *Essences* and three *Spirits* doth lead, *by necessary and unavoidable Consequences*, to the Socinianism that is now so called. For tho *Laelius Socinus*, *Blandrata*, and the rest, did abide a while in it; that three *Essences* and *Spirits* are one God, because only the first of them is *ἀγέννητος*, unoriginated as to his Being and Godhead, the other two derive Being and Godhead from him: yet after some time, it was perceived by 'em, that three Infinite *Essences*, three all-perfect *Spirits*, are not the less three Gods, because the second and third are originated from the first; for it can be only said in the case, that the first God generated two other Gods. Originated or not originated is not what maketh a God, but *Omnimodous Perfection*; therefore if the second and third *Spirits* are each of them

them All-perfect, he is not less a God, than the first is. This Reflection gave birth, to the modern Socinianism, or the Socinianism that now is; for *Laelius Socinus* soon dying, his Nephew *Faustus Socinus* convinced *Blandrata*, and the others, that they must no longer say three *Essences* and *Spirits*; but *one* Essence, *one* Spirit; and also, but *one Person*. *Faustus Socinus* took *Person*, and intellectual Essence or intellectual Substance, to signify the same thing; he thought them, equivalent terms: therefore, because he plainly saw, that three (Infinite All-perfect) *Essences* or *Spirits* are certainly three *Gods*; he contended, being neither a Critick nor a Metaphysician, that as there is *but one Divine Essence or Spirit*, we ought also to say there is *but one Divine Person*. In short; the Dean's more warm Opposers say, his Doctrine (of a Trinity of *Essences* and *Spirits*) is the same that was affirmed by *Laelius Socinus*, and other Founders of Socinianism: and that in its Consequences, it leads to the modern (or present) Socinianism, the Socinianism of *Faustus Socinus*; for the Unity of God, or that there is *but one God*, can never be defended, by *these* Men who hold *Person* and *intellectual Substance* to be the same, but only on the Principles of *Faustus Socinus*, and the modern Socinians. Thus, I say, some Orthodox Writers argue; they are persuaded, that as this Doctor maintains the Heresy of *Laelius Socinus*; he must, of necessity, by attending to the Consequences of his Doctrine, make a Coalition or Closure (in the end) with *Faustus Socinus*, and the present Socinianism; if it be not already his Opinion, and Aim. As for Subscriptions, Protestations, and such like; Dr. *Sherlock* may multiply them, as much as he pleases: but they are resolved, never to believe him; for they pretend that his Predecessors (*L. Socinus*, *G. Blandrata*, &c.) never stuck at such Matters; but made use of 'em as *Artifices*, to get into Acquaintance and Esteem with the Orthodox, and then seduce them. But, for my part, I judg the Dean, tho most certainly a Disciple of *Laelius Socinus*, may easily be brought off, from the Imputation of being a Socinian, according to the Model of *Faustus Socinus*, and the present Socinians. For, it is true, he holds three *Essences* and *Spirits*; and he thinks, *Person* and *intellectual Substance* signify the same thing, so that in multiplying the one you necessarily multiply the other: and it is no less true; that on these two Principles, or in consequence of these two Principles; he can never defend the Unity of God, but on the grounds of *Faustus Socinus*, and the modern Socinians; namely, that God is

indeed *but one Person*. I say, I grant, both these Imputations on the Doctor, are true : and yet it will not follow, that in very deed he is a Socinian after the Model of *Fauftus*, or aims to introduce the Socinian Scheme, as 'tis held by the Modern Socinians. For having disclaimed the use of *Reason*, in Matters of Religion, he is bound up by no *Consequences*, tho never so clear or certain : for all *Consequences* are the Children of Reason ; against which (in Disputes of Religion, and the *Articles of Faith*) the Doctor has protested, before my Lord Mayor, and the Court of Aldermen. If it be never so certain, that he holds as *Laelius Socinus* did ; and never so evident, that the necessary *Consequence* from thence, is the Scheme of *Fauftus Socinus* : this can never affect him ; who disclaiming *Reason*, is therefore discharged of the foolish Trouble, of attending to *Consequences* ; which are mere *Brats of Reason*. He may be as clear of any Design to introduce the Scheme of *Fauftus Socinus*, notwithstanding these *Suspensions*, of some right Orthodox Men ; as he is, of bringing in *Presbytery* ; which, in my heart, I cannot think he intends, now he is become a *Dean*. We have said enough, to his first Proposition ; that Reason, and Philosophy, are the two Idols of Atheists and Hereticks : and that make Atheists to be Atheists, and Hereticks to be Hereticks.

### To the Second.

He saith again : " That to ascertain what is the very and true Faith, we must attend only to *that* Meaning of Scripture which the Words and Phrases do imply : rejecting all mixture of *Reason*, and *Philosophy* ; in our Disputes about Religion, and our *Inquiries concerning the Meaning* of Scripture. That is, he is for giving up the Protestant Religion, to the Old Gentleman at *Rome* ; and the Christian Religion in general, to the certain Triumph of Deists and Hereticks. Reason and Philosophy, he saith, must not be admitted into our Disputes about Religion, or our *Inquiries concerning the Meaning* of Scripture : no, the Words and Phrases of Scripture, in their obvious and natural Sense, are the only things, that must determine our Disputes, form the Articles of Religion, and settle the meaning of Scripture. For instance, the Question is, concerning the Transubstantiation : the Words and Phrases are these : *This is my Body. My FLESH is Meat indeed, my BLOOD is Drink indeed. He that eateth my FLESH,*



*FLESH, and drinketh my BLOOD, the same dwelleth in me, and I in him.* Yes, say *Reason* and *Philosophy*, the Lord Christ had a *Body*, and that Body was *Flesh* and *Blood*: but when Bread is called his *Body* or his *Flesh*, and Wine his *Blood*; it could not be intended that Bread is Humane *Flesh*, or Wine is *Blood*, in reality of the thing, but only in signification or sign. Bread is the *Flesh* of Christ, and Wine his *Blood*, by way of sign and signification: and to say otherwise is a *Contradiction* to the nature of the things spoken of. that is, to *Philosophy*, and also to *Reason*; which assures us that the real Body of Christ cannot be in Heaven, and on the Altar, at the same time. Exclude, now, *Reason* and *Philosophy* out of this Dispute, and from the Enquiry concerning the meaning of the words and phrases of Scripture, about this matter, and it will be undeniable that the advantage is wholly on the Popish side: a Protestant Doctor, and he too a Dean of St. Pauls, gives away our only Strengths against the common Adversary. Our Saviour says of a piece of Bread, *This is my Body*; if now *Reason* and *Philosophy* must not interpret, How will Dr. Sherlock avoid, either the Papist on the one side, or the Lutheran on the other? He cannot have recourse to *Sense*, in the case; 'tis only *Philosophy* or *Reason* that must help him out: for tho the Apostles who saw and tasted that it was Bread only, and not *Flesh*, might have appealed also to their *Senses*; yet we that never saw or tasted the Substance which Jesus gave then to the Disciples, can know by *Reason* and *Philosophy* only, by nothing else, that it was not his *Flesh* and *Blood*.

We argue, "He took Bread, and blessed it, and gave to his Disciples; and said, *Take, eat, This is my Body*. The Text expressly says it was Bread which he blessed and brake, and called it *his Body*; therefore, it was his Body in sign and signification, not in reality. All this is arguing; 'tis *Reason* that convinces us, not *Sense*, that the Substance he divided to them was indeed Bread, not *his Flesh*, which he neither blessed nor brake.

But if our Preacher says, he believes it was only Bread, because the Text it self calls it Bread; let him consider, that seeing what was called Bread, before Christ blessed it; after the Blessing he calls it *his Body*: We cannot know, by *Sense* or by the Text, but by *Reason* and *Philosophy* only, that it was not changed (by the Blessing) into what now he calls it, namely *his Body*.

The Papists believe it was *Bread* that Christ took: but because when he had *brake* and *blessed* it, he calls it *his Body*; they conclude, that *by the Blessing* it was changed into the *substance* of *Flesh*, but without change of the *Accidents*. I say now, tho *Sense* might interpret the words *this is my Body* to the Apostles, who *saw* it and *tasted* it, yet to *us* (who neither *saw* nor *tasted*) those words cannot be rightly interpreted, but only by *Reason* and *Philosophy*; because, tho *the Text* also calls it *Bread*, yet not after it was *blessed*.

I might give a hundred the like Instances, but I think 'tis not worth while; for there is no man of any consideration but will acknowledg, from the force of this one Example, that *Philosophy* and *Reason* may be very useful in the Disputes about Religion, and for ascertaining *the meaning* of Scripture; and that by no means should they be wholly excluded, as this Noveller pretends.

#### To the Third.

“ As we are Christians, and unless we will be understood to reject the Supream Authority of Divine Revelation, we must believe those Doctrines which are thought to be *most* mysterious and inconceivable, notwithstanding *any* Objections from *Reason*, or from *Philosophy*, against 'em. He that believes no farther than Natural Reason approves, believes his Reason, and not the Revelation; he is a *Natural Philosopher*, not a *Believer*. He believes the Scriptures, as he would believe *Plato* or *Tully*; not as they are inspired Writings, but as agreeable to Reason, and as the Result of wise and deep Thoughts.

I snufft my Candle, and put on my Spectacles, when I read this; I could not believe but that I mistook, for want of a better sight: but Spectacles and Candle both stood to it, that my Eyes had not deceived me. I entreat therefore *the Dean of St. Pauls*, to reconcile what he says here, with as clear a Passage, in *Dr. Sberlock's Vindication of the Trinity*, pag. 151. where the Doctor says: “ Suppose, that the *natural Construllion* of the words of Scripture import such a Sense, as is contrary to some evident Principle of *Reason*? *Then I won't believe it*. How, not believe Scripture? No, no; I will believe no pretended *Revelation*, which contradicts the plain Dictates of *Reason*. Were I perswaded that the Books called *Holy Scripture* “ did



" did contradict the plain Dictates of *Reason*, I would not believe 'em. If this *Vindication of the Trinity* was written, as the Doctor intimates in the Preface to it, by *Divine Inspiration*; it would tempt one to think that his Sermon, before my Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen, was compos'd by *Diabolical Suggestion*; for no man, not the Doctor himself, will deny, that they directly contradict one another. The *Sermon* says, we are to believe the *most* mysterious and inconceivable Doctrines, notwithstanding *any* Objections of *Reason*: the inspired *Vindication* says, we are not to believe Scripture if it contradicts *Reason*. The *Sermon* says, to believe no farther than *Reason* approves, is to be a Philosopher, not a Believer: the *Vindication* (divinely suggested) says, if *Reason* approves not, but gainsays or contradicts, we are not to believe whatsoever *Revelation*.

As to that, which he intended (I imagine) as a choice Thought; that to believe no farther than *Reason* approves, is to believe the Scriptures but only as we would believe *Plato* or *Tully*. It will not help the *Preacher* in the least. For when the *Vindicator*, or any other man, sees cause, to disbelieve somewhat in *Tully* or *Plato*; he considers that, tho' they were indeed great men, yet being but men, they were fallible; it might readily happen that they oversaw in some particular matter, oversaw what less able Persons might happen to discern. But when Reason cannot approve Doctrines, said by some to be contained in Scripture; as suppose, *three* Infinite Spirits, each of them a God, and yet all of them but *one* God: an honest man will easily find a great many Expedients, much better than the *Vindicator's* downright *I won't believe the Scriptures*; He will say, for example: Let us examine very carefully, whether this contradictory impossible (and heretical) Doctrine; *three* Infinite Spirits, each of them a perfect God, all of them but one; is indeed affirmed any where in Scripture? It is not found there, before, in express words; it only seems to some few Upstarts, to be implied in some Passages of Scripture: therefore, says the honest Christian, if those Passages bid any thing fair, toward such a Doctrine; it's better however to suppose, 'tis more congruous to think, that an Inspired Writer uses a *figurative*, or it may be a *cataphorical* Expression or Phrase, than that he delivers flat Contradictions, or downright impossibilities.

In short, I say; there is an honest Medium, between Dr. *Sherlock's* Impious *I won't believe the Scriptures*, and between believing what *Reason* and

and *Philosophy* do absolutely reject. It is this, That we know the Inspired Writers do often speak figuratively, nay often catachrestically or improperly: All Interpreters confess so much. There is hardly a Chapter in the Bible where they do not observe it more than once; and therefore mollify the *words* or *phrase* by a dexterous Interpretation. So that neither the *Vindicator*, after all his pretences to Inspiration, is to be heard, when he cries, *I won't believe the Scripture*: nor yet the *Preacher*, when he cants to my Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen, That no Objections of *Reason* can be admitted against the *meer phrases* and *words* of Scripture. A Rule of Interpreting, that would let in the Transubstantiation, and a hundred more absurd and heretical Doctrines.

#### On the Fourth.

He tells us next. " Difficulty of conceiving a thing, nay the absolute unconceivableness of it, must not hinder our assent to what is contained in *Revelation*; because we do not disbelieve what is made known to us by *Sense*, or by *Reason*, notwithstanding any *Difficulty* or *Inconceivableness* adhering to such things. And as to *Contradictions*, so often objected in these cases; 'tis an easy matter to find Contradictions in what we do not understand: when we will be reasoning on what we do not understand, there will be *Contradictions* and *Impossibilities* innumerable, in our Guesses about 'em.

I sincerely believe that God may reveal to us many things, impenetrable or unconceivable, not only by the Humane Understanding, but by the Angelical. But 'tis not true, what our Preacher here adds, by way of confirmation or proof; namely, that we believe what is made known to us by *Sense*, or by *Reason*, notwithstanding any difficulty or inconceivableness, adhering to some such things. For *Sense* tells me, that the *Oar* in the Water is *crooked*; that all distant Bodies for Colour are *dark*, and for Figure *round*; it tells me also a great number of things in my Sleep; it presents me (in Dreams) with abundance of Scenes; all which I disbelieve, for certain *Difficulties*, or an *Inconceivableness* in the things. In like manner, I know but few Men who believe *Reason* when it is not clear, but perplexed with *Difficulties*, or darkening Doubts, but especially when there is a remarkable and manifest *Inconceivableness*. In that case we do not use to call it *Reason*, but, at best,

best, Probability and Opinion. Great *Difficulties*, and a too dark *Unconceivableness*, are such a Ballance to whatsoever *Reasons*; that they lose the name of *Reasons*, and are detrudd into the rank of *Likelihoods*: and a very honourable rank it is, for such kind of *Reasons*.

But he plainly shows what he would have, and what his desperate Cause requires, when he so carefully adds: *As to Contradictions, and Impossibilities, there will be many; whenever we will be reasoning about such things, as we understand not.* I shall tell him; not, if there be many, as he says: but if there be any *Contradictions*, or *Impossibilities*; the thing proposed becomes thereby, *increasable*. But if we will be reasoning, *he says*, about what we do not understand; there will be many *Contradictions*, and *Impossibilities*, in our *Guesses* concerning such things. I answer, if those *Guesses* do imply *Contradictions*, or *Impossibilities*; they are such *Guesses*, as none but Fools would make: for an *Impossibility*, or a *Contradiction*, is an obvious thing; of which, none but *Philosophers of Gotham* will be guilty. If we are reasoning about things, that we do not understand; and there is no occasion, that I know of, to reason about any thing else: Why must we needs be overseen as far as *Contradictions* and *Impossibilities*? are there no Mistakes to be made, but those gross ones, *Impossibilities* and *Contradictions*?

It has been ever held, by the soberest Divines, that *Contradictions* cannot be verified by the Divine Omnipotence, or Omniscience, it self: and that, when we say, *all things are possible to God*; we ought to mean it, of *possible things*; for as for *Impossibilities*, they are not the Objects of Omnipotence: God can no more do impossible things, than he can know false things to be true things, which (most certainly) is not knowable. A Sermon therefore, on behalf of *Contradictions* and *Impossibilities*, cannot be more absurd, than 'tis Heterodox, and universally condemned, by Divines of all Perswasions. But this Dean has outface'd a Decree, of the University of *Oxford*, in a matter, in which, if they had mistaken, all the Universities of Christendom had been obliged, to declare against them, and would have declared: therefore we need not to wonder, that now in a Sermon he as little scruples to contravene the known and agreed Sense and Judgment, of all the several Denominations, or Sects, of Christians. I shall

confess, I am for an ingenuous Liberty; and that too, in Questions of the greatest Importance: but every body knows, how bitterly Dr. *Sherlock* has always oppos'd (and still opposes) all Dissenters, either from the *Doctrine or Discipline of the Church*: therefore, tho I should not object it to another, yet to him, 'tis but his due, to tell him of the unparallel'd Immodesty of his Dissent, and Separation from the Catholick Church. That he has advanced a Heresy, concerning the Blessed Trinity; condemned by General Councils, Decrees of Universities, and Consent of Writers: and he maintains it by Pleas, *against Philosophy and Reason*, and for Contradictions and Impossibilities; no less generally reprobated on all hands, than his Heresy it self is.

*On his Answer to the first Objection.*

**A**FTER such a Defence of his Heterodoxies, as *never was before heard*; he proceeds to answer to *two* Objections, that *never were made*; or however, by none but himself. And tho it is a very injudicious, and needless Confession, of a conscience to a Man's own Insufficiencie; to pass over known, and very dangerous Objections: and answer only to Chimeras, and Follies, never suggested, or thought of, by any. Yet Dr. *Sherlock* is overseen, much farther, and worse, than that; for he not only overlooks the Objections of the Socinians, and replies to some Weaknesses, that no body would have thought of, but the Answerer: but his Answers are not, to those Objections; but to something else. The Reader shall not again rely upon me, if I do not satisfy him; and without the trouble of an instant Application, that this *Maintainer of Paradoxes*, had forgot his Objection, when he came to his Answer. He objects, first:

“ It seems very unnatural, that God having made us reasonable  
 “ Creatures; and thereby made Reason to be to us, the Measure of  
 “ Truth, and Falshood: we should be required, *to believe without Reason*.  
 “ *son*. And if we must believe, with our Understandings; how can  
 “ we believe what we do not understand? I do not believe, as I said,  
 “ any Sect of Religious, ever made this or the like Objection. For 'tis  
 “ very obvious to be seen, and understood; that tho we are made *reasonable*  
 “ Creatures, and do believe (or assent) with our Understandings:  
 yet

yet because we cannot but be aware, that *our* Reasons and Understandings are finite and imperfect, often short-sighted, and as often over-seeing things; and the Wisdom and Power of God, seen in the Contrivance and Structure of the World, most perfect; therefore, *he* may reveal many things to us, to be believed by us, tho' we understand them not, nor have any other Cause of our believing them, but only God's Revelation of them. We ought to believe God, as Children do their Parents; or as we our selves believe sage and sober Persons, in Matters belonging to their particular Art or Craft: that is to say, believe them *on their Word*; and for the just Opinion we have, of their superiour Knowledge in such Matters. To dispute against this, is such a degree of Folly; that, tho' I dare not answer for every particular Man: yet I know well, and any reasonable body will suppose; there never was any Party of Men, or Sect of Religious, that could be so overseen. I grant indeed, as 'tis in the Objection; that, *Reason is the measure of Truth and Falshood*: but not the frail, fallible Reason, of Men; but the *infallible* Wisdom of God. And in this, all Sects agree. The Objection therefore is Chimerical, and was never made by any sort of Opposers: 'tis only a loose Thought of this Preacher; and advanced, to help fill up a crude Sermon. Well, but what is the wise Answer, to a silly Objection? Why, this.

“ When an Objection is made against any thing, that it is (as we apprehend) *without* Reason, or against and *contrary* to Reason: the Objection is of no value, if such thing is not the proper Object of Reason. Such as the *Natures* and *Essences* of things, their *essential Reasons*, *Unions*, *Operations*, and *Properties*: which no Man can pretend, are the Objects of Reason; or that any Man living can know any thing of them. And this, *he adds farther*, is all the Incomprehensibility, or Contradiction; that any can charge on the Trinity, or I carnation. By the *Trinity*, meaning his *Trinity of Spirits*. As I said, in the name of Goodness, what is this Answer, to that Objection? The Objection is; why should reasonable Creatures be obliged to believe things, without Reason? The Answer is; an Objection is of no value, if the Matter under dispute is not the Object of Reason. Plainly, *this* Answer is not to *that* Objection; but concerning quite another thing: namely, that we must argue by Reason, only for or against such things as are the Objects of Reason. But that



this wild Answer might look like somewhat, he adds ; the *Substances, Essences, Reasons, Properties, Unions, and Operations of things*, are not Objects of Reason : and no Man living can know any thing of them. Then, there is nothing, that is the Object of Reason ; and no Man living knows any thing at all : for this Enumeration (*Substances, Essences, Reasons, Unions, Properties, Operations*) comprehends all things, even the whole of created and uncreated Nature. It is certain, and confess'd by all Men, but this Gentleman ; who seems to delight in nothing so much as Paradoxes, and thinks the Folpit and Profis the likeliest Places, to make 'em famous and remarkable : that, our Reason can be no otherwise employed, but either about *Substances, or their Unions, essential Reasons, Operations, or Properties*. What is it, Sir, I pray ; but either, it is a *Substance*, or the *Property*, or *Operation* of a Substance ? For as to *essential Reasons*, and *Unions* ; the former (as well as *Modes* and *Accidents*) come under the general name of *Properties*. Ridibilty (for instance) is an essential Reason. of *Man as he is Man* ; and yet it is reckoned among the *Properties* : as well as *Gratuity, Grossness, Agility, Slowness, Whiteness, Redness*, and such like *Modes* and *Accidents*, are called the *Properties of particular Men* ; Properties by which they are distinguished from one another. As essential Reasons are but *Properties* ; so *Unions* are but the *Operations*, of *Substances* or their *Properties*. In short, I say, that without being needlessly nice, *Substances*, with their *Properties* and *Operations*, will denote the whole Complex of things : their *Reasons* and *Unions* are superfluously added. And if these are not the Objects of Reason, Reason has no Objects at all : In truth, they are the only things about which Reason is conversant. Metaphysicians consider *spiritual Substances*, their *Properties*, and *Operations* : Natural Philosophers consider *Bodies* or *corporeal Substances*, their *Operations* and their *Properties* : Particular Arts and Crafts are conversant about particular *Bodies* ; as Physicians and Chirurgions about the humane Body ; Chymists about Plants and Metals ; the Lapidary about Jewels ; the Apothecary about Drugs. Do these Artists know nothing about the *Substances*, their *Properties* or *Operations*, their *Unions* and *essential Reasons* ; about which, both their Minds and Bodies are every day employed ? Assuredly, when the Court desired Mr. Dean of St. Paul's to print this Sermon ; they could not have done him a greater Disservice ; than thus to prompt his Vanity, to expose his scandalous Inadversions, to the



the View (and Scorn) of every body. It is well seen, why this Dean has preach'd against Philosophy; Because he hath very little himself. He has heard of Essence, Properties, Operations, essential Reasons: and not knowing well what they mean, he guesses, they are things, that a zealous Preacher ought to bestir himself against. A little more Zeal and Ignorance might have qualified him, to be one of my Lords the Inquisitors; in the Inquisition-Office at *Liebon*: where lately they condemned an English *Mare*, to be burnt as a *Wuch*, because she could signify the Hour of the Day, on a Watch or Clock, could dance to a Fiddle; with several such little Feats, as are easily taught to Beasts. Some Persons interceded with the Holy Fathers, for the *Mare*; telling 'em, she had been shown all over Christendom: and that these Tricks had been often taught, to other docile Beasts; especially to *Elephants*. But the Fathers, as zealous as some body else against what they did not understand, answered; she shall be burnt: for admitting she is not a *Wuch*; be sure, coming from *England* she is a *Heretick*.

He says, Lastly: " *This* (that the Question is about *Essences*, " *Unions*, *Properties*) is all the *Incomprehensibleness*, that can be " charged on the Doctrines of the Trinity, and Incarnation. For my part, to deal frankly; after all the bustle and noise that has been made, on both sides, about *Mysteries* and *Incomprehensibles*: I know no Incomprehensibleness, or Mystery, in the Catholick Doctrines of the Trinity, and the Incarnation: I mean, as they are explained and declared by the Church; and now received, by the Unitarians themselves: not, as they are perverted, and misrepresented, by a (little) Faction; that have learned, from Dr. *Cudworth*, to call themselves *Realists*; as if their *Tritheism* were the only real Trinity.

The Church teaches, that there is but one Eternal All-perfect Spirit; but one infinite spiritual Substance: and this is what we indifferently call *G D*, the *Divinity*, the *Deity*, the *Divine Nature*, the *Divine Essence* or Substance. As to the distinction of *Persons* in the Deity; to use the Words of the Bishop of *Worcester*: " When we consider a Divine Essence, there can be no  
" di-

“ distinction conceived in it. but by *different Modes* of Subsistence; or (what is the same) *different relative Properties*. The Trinity then is the Divine Essence, Godhead, or Deity, consider’d under three *different Modes* of Subsistence; which are called *Relative Properties*, because they *distinguish*, and because a threefold *Relation* arises (in the Deity) from them: and *Persons* they are called, because distinguishing characterizing Properties; whether in a *common Nature*, or in *particular Natures* or Substances; when considered with the Nature or Substance, make what ancient and constant Custom nameth *Persons*. These Modes or Properties are by some more particularly described; St. *Austin*, and (from him) the Divines of the Schools, insist upon *Intellectus*, *Notitia*, & *Amor*: or *Original Mind* or Wisdom; the *Logos* or *reflex Wisdom*, generated by Mind; and the Spiritation of *Divine Love*. The first, as generating, is named the *Father*; the second, being generated, by a condescension to humane Language, is called the *Son*: the third, being a Spiritation, has the name of *Spirit*. I know not, as I said, what Mystery or Incomprehensibleness there is, in this account, which has been the Language and Explication of the Church ever since St. *Austin*: and not of the Latin Church only, but of the Greek; as I intend to prove at large, whenever leisure and a fit opportunity shall serve.

I see plainly, that the occasion of calling the Trinity a Mystery; except only among the Unlearned, or not Learned in Scholastick and Philosophical Terms, and the various Acceptations of them. I say, the occasion of calling the Doctrine of the Trinity, a Mystery, was this; because the term *Persons*; and again, *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, are used concerning the Deity, in a very different Sense, from their Import or Meaning, when used of Men; or other created Beings. For all humane *Persons*, and *Father*, and *Son*, among Men, are distinguished not only by different *Modes* and *Properties*, but by distinct Substances, Intellects, and Wills: but the Deity is but one Essence or spiritual Substance, with one Understanding, Will, and Energy in number. Thus the Idea of *Persons*, and of *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, in God, implying a Notion so very different, from the meaning of the same

same terms, when spoken of Men and created Beings : 'twas thought fit, to say, they are used concerning God, in a *mystical* Sense ; concerning other Beings, in a profane or *common* Sense. A Sense of Words or Terms, not so usually applied ; or rather, contrary to the vulgar and secular Use of them, was named *Mystery* : at first, I judge, only by the less Learned ; afterwards, to conciliate the greater Reverence to the Article, by the more Learned also.

As to the Incarnation. The Doctrine of the Church, has nothing in it, in the least unconceivable or mysterious : viz. That the Godhead, (as St. Paul speaks) *κατοικῶν* ; or (as St. John) *ἐσθλῶσεν*, *tabernacled* and *dwelleth* in the Lord Christ. Not as in Prophets, *occasionally*, and *in measure* : but as the Soul in the Body, viz. *always* enlightning and actuating him ; and exerting by him and in him the Divine Attributes, Omnipotence and Omniscience ; so that 'tis truly said, *God was made Man*, and the Lord Christ is God. Yet not as *Eurycles* exceeded in the case ; so that God was *changed* into Man, and the Humanity was *Deified* ; which, besides that 'tis blasphemous, is also contradictory : but so, that the Terms used are to be interpreted by the Doctrine ; not the Doctrine by the Terms : That is to say ; We believe, that God is essentially *Omni-present* : but dwelling in the Lord Christ, as the Soul in the Body ; that is, *always* enlightning and actuating him, by an eternal *indissoluble Union* ; exerting also in him and by him the proper Characters of the Divinity, Omniscience (the Knowledge of the future, and of the Thoughts, &c.) and Omnipotence, that is the Power of *Miracles*, and of *Creation*, as was seen in the case of the multiplied Loaves and Fishes ; therefore we rightly affirm a *communication of Idioms*, as to the terms : Namely, that in respect of such an Incarnation, God became Man ; and the Lord Christ was true God.

I say, there is nothing in these two Explications, that is incomprehensible, or mysterious : there was no reason, that F. Socinus, or (that very learned Person) J. Crellius, should cry *Jargon*, and *Mystery* ; and as little that Catholick Writers should defend these Doctrines, under the name of great Difficulties, myf-

mysterious and inconceivable Articles. There is nothing in them, that can puzzle either a learned or a discerning Man; nothing that shocks our Reason, or to which any Syltem of Philosophy yet known makes any opposition. If what is intended in the Terms of these Articles, is made intelligible, nay obvious; and if the Explication implies nothing, contrary to Philosophy or Reason, that is, to *experimental* or to *natural* Knowledge: I shall be glad to be taught, why these Articles must be called *Mysteries*; a name that offends so many, and in which others so much delight, both (in my poor Judgment) without Cause.

*To his Answer unto the last Objection.*

THE Second Objection is this: "To what purpose can such a Revelation serve, or of what use can such a Faith be; which is concerning things that we cannot understand, or cannot comprehend? I do not think, any Sect of Religious ever made this Objection: for how could it escape them, that, *on the one side*, the Articles of Religion are *not altogether inconceivable*, or unintelligible; and that *on the other hand*, there is scarce any thing in Nature, or in Art, that is *altogether conceivable* and intelligible?

But let us hear what the Preacher says upon it. He says:

1. "We may use the World, *as fully*; and every thing in it, *to as good purpose*; as if *we understood* the Reasons, and internal Natures of things. No, Trifler; not so fully, nor to so good purpose, as if we *better understood* the Natures of things. Nay, we can make no use at all of it; but only so far forth, as we understand the Nature, and Reasons of things in it. We can use nothing, to any purpose, till we know or understand something of its Nature: and no farther can we apply it, and use it, than we understand its Nature, and know its Properties and Powers. The matter is so plain, I will dwell no longer upon it.

He

He says, Lastly : “ The *lapsed* State of Nature, makes *supernatural Knowledge* necessary : when Man had sinned, he forfeited the Favour of God, and his natural Immortality ; and *the Light of Nature* could not teach him, how to make Atonement for Sin ; or give any hope that God would bestow Immortal Life. True, but not in the least to the purpose : ’tis no Answer, to *that* Objection ; but to another : namely, to this ; why Revelation, or a *supernatural Knowledge*, is necessary ; or however, highly requisite ? The Objection was, concerning a Revelation, and Faith, *not intelligible, or not conceivable* : The Answer is, only concerning Revelation (or *supernatural Knowledge*) in general, why it was given to Men ? There is a great difference between *supernaturally revealed*, and *unconceivable* : the whole Christian Religion, the Precepts as well as Faith of it, is a *supernatural Revelation* ; and yet a System so intelligible, that it must be taught to the Women, to the Poor, and even to little Children. It was not made the matter of *supernatural Revelation* ; for its Difficulty, Mysteriousness, or Transcendency of the humane Understanding : but to ascertain the Truth of it ; and to enforce its Authority, in the World.

I have done with the Sermon ; and shall hope that such *Apolo- gists* for the Articles of the Catholick Church, as first corrupt those Articles by an Heretical Sense put on them ; and then betray them, by a Defence partly false, and partly weak ; will no more be encouraged to print, as well as preach, their Errors and Follies. I know, ’tis an usual Civility of the Court, especially to such Divines as are Dignified, Doctors and Deans ; to desire them, to print their Sermons : I know too, that some heard this Sermon, and moved the printing of it ; who understood well the Heretical Aim of the Preacher, and expected it would be answered, by some or other that understood the Doctrine of the Church, and how to defend it. Notwithstanding, it were better, that treacherous Defences, and false Representations, of the Articles of our Faith, might not be countenanced out of a (dangerous) Civility to the erroneous



Person : or Poison be sold, and even cried about the Streets ; from an expectation of some good Antidote, that may be found against it ; I mean, that it might not be sold and cried about, by direction of an Honourable Court, only in compliment to the mere Station or Post, in which Mr. Preacher happens to be.

As for him, we know before-hand, what his Defence will be ; the same that he always makes ; on this occasion : as he has answer'd to the *Oxford-Heads*, to Dr. S—th, and to the Author of *A Judgment of the Controversy, between Dr. S—th and Dr. Sherlock* ; that his Opposer is a Sabellian, or a Socinian. By which Insolencies, and Falshoods, he has at last so provok'd every body ; that the Charge of Socinianism is now brought home, to himself : and may it be left, where 'tis so well deserved, and so truly imputed. There is nothing more true, than that his Sentiments about the Trinity are the same, with those of *Laelius Socinus*, *V. Gentilis*, *G. Blandrata*, *J. Lismaninus*, and other Founders of Socinianism : and that he can never defend the Unity of God, on those Principles. He will be led, by a necessary Chain of Consequences, to the Scheme of *Faustus Socinus* : which is built on this Mistake, common to him and Dr. *Sherlock* ; that *Person* and a particular *intelligent Essence* or *Substance*, are equivalent terms, so that in saying *three Persons*, you say also *three Essences*. The Ground of *Faustus Socinus*, and which if true, all Men grant that his Scheme also of Religion would be true, is, that *Person* and a particular *intelligent Substance* are the same ; that as often as you multiply one, you multiply the other : from whence *Faustus* concluded, we must not say three Divine *Persons* ; because 'tis a granting three Divine *Substances* or *Essences*, which would be three *Gods*. Lest Dr. *Sherlock* should deny, that he takes the same Ground with *Faustus Socinus* ; and therefore, that in consequence their Schemes are coincident ; I will subjoin his very Words : “ A *Person*, and “ an *intelligent Substance*, are reciprocal terms : and three distinct *Persons*, are three distinct numerical *Substances* ; and “ one numerical *intelligent Substance*, is but one numerical *Person*. “ *Vindic.* p. 69. Again, “ How can three distinct Persons have “ but



“ but *one* numerical Substance? What is the Distinction, between *Essence*, *Personality*, and *Subsistence*? p. 139.

To conclude; All the Difference between *F. Socinus* and this Man is; *Socinus* saw the Consequences of his Principles, without a Monitor: the other, even when admonish'd, does not, or (as some think) will not see them.

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## A P O S T S C R I P T

By another Hand.

**T**HIS Author has told his Reader, p. 7. that Dr. *Sh.* hath not indeed in this Sermon declar'd expressly, what kind of Trinity he pleads for; but he intimates it, and plainly points to it, at p. 7, & 10. But besides what is there said, for making known the Dean's Doctrine of a *Trinity of Spirits and Substances*, I conceive it may give greater Evidence of it, to cite a Passage or two concerning it out of his Book, *The Vindication of the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity*, &c. where we find, p. 66. “ It is “ plain, the Persons are perfectly distinct, for they are three distinct and infinite Minds.—To say, they are three Divine “ Persons, and not three distinct Infinite Minds, is both Heresy “ and Non-sense. They are three intelligent Beings. Father, “ Son, and Holy Ghost, are as really distinct Persons as *Peter*, “ *James*, and *John*, (p. 105.) They are three Holy Spirits, p. 258. “ There is no Contradiction that three Infinite Minds should be “ absolutely perfect, in Wisdom, Goodness, Justice and Power; “ for these are Perfections that may be in more than one, p. 81. “ And p. 47. We must allow the Divine Persons to be real substantial Beings—the three Divine Persons are substantially distinct. This now is that Doctrine which Dr. *Sherlock* must be understood to plead for in this Sermon. It is the Mystery of this

Trinity, of which he says, p. 12. *The Inconceivableness can be no Argument against the Truth of the Revelation, or that Sense of the Words which contains such Mysteries.* These are the things (he says) we must believe, tho we do not see; things which we have no natural Notion or Conception of, things that are not evident to natural Reason. The meaning is plainly this; We must believe his Doctrine of three distinct and Infinite Minds and Spirits, however it does in our clearest Reason, improv'd also by most evident Revelation, introduce the Worship of three Gods, for what is so evident both in Reason and Revelation, as that God is *one Infinite Mind and Spirit*, and not three? But Dr. Sh. has devis'd some pretty new terms, such as *Self-consciousness* and *mutual Consciousness*, whereby to elude the Testimony of Holy Scripture concerning the perfect Oneness of God: but Reason contradicts him, and will not suffer him to destroy that glorious Attribute under the notion of *unconceivable Mystery*: She says, it's not Mystery, but a plain Inconsistency; therefore Dr. Sh. would have her Mouth stopp'd, or our Ears stopp'd, that we may not hear what Reason says, tho in consent with Revelation; or at least that we should give no heed to what she says.

Our Author has told us, that the *Oxford-Decree* condemns this Doctrine as *Impious and Heretical*; contrary to the Doctrine of the Catholick Church, and the Church of *England*. But if we will believe this Preacher, the *Oxford-Heads* have pass'd that Sentence, because they give too much heed to natural Reason and Philosophy; and exalt what those say, even above Revelation. This brings to my mind what the late Archbishop of Blessed Memory determin'd in the Dispute between Reason and Revelation. Dr. *Sherlock* did him a great deal of Right in a Sermon upon the sad occasion of his Death, I hope he will not now despise his Judgment. That great Man upon 1 John 4. 1. says, 1. *That Reason is the Faculty whereby Revelations are to be discerned.* 2. *All supernatural Revelation supposeth the Truth of the Principles of natural Religion.* 3. *All Reasonings about Divine Revelations must necessarily be governed by the Principles of natural Religion*, that is, "by those Apprehensions which Men naturally have of the Divine Perfections, and by the clear Notions of Good and Evil, which are imprint'd upon our Nature."

" tures. Because we have no other way to judge of what is wor-  
 " thy of God, and credible to be reveal'd by him, and what not,  
 " but by natural Notions which we have of God, and of his essen-  
 " tial Perfections——and by these Principles likewise we are to  
 " interpret what God hath reveal'd; and when any doubt ariseth  
 " concerning the Meaning of any Divine Revelation, (as that of  
 " the Holy Scriptures) we are to govern our selves in the Inter-  
 " pretation of it, by what is most agreeable to those natural No-  
 " tions which we have of God; and we have all the Reason in the  
 " World to reject that Sense which is contrary thereto. 4. No-  
 " thing ought to be receiv'd as a Revelation from God, which  
 " plainly contradicts the Principles of natural Religion, or over-  
 " throws the Certainty of them. Under this Head that excellent  
 " Man concludes; " That a Miracle is not enough to give credit to  
 " a Prophet that teacheth any thing, contrary to that natural No-  
 " tion which Men have, *That there is but one God, who only ought to*  
 " *be worshipped.* Thus we see that in the Judgment of the late  
 " Archbishop, Dr. *Sherlock's* Trinity would not be made credible,  
 " tho a Miracle should be wrought in Testimony of it, because it  
 " contradicts the Principles of natural Religion, that is, of natural  
 " Reason.

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F I N I S.